



medicine, essentially full time, and only 26 per cent plan academic careers.

The Harvard Medical School is widely considered to be more oriented toward research and academic careers than are most schools of medicine, yet even here, examining plans of medical students in the class of '73, only 4 per cent are choosing the basic sciences; 6 per cent biomedical engineering, and 16 per cent full-time clinical faculty. The others will go into clinical medicine, public health or part-time clinical-academic work plus private practice.

It is also worth looking at some figures with respect to the proportion of medical care in this country provided by teaching hospitals, i. e. those affiliated directly with medical schools, as compared with the total number of hospitals. Teaching hospitals account for 6 per cent of the total 7,000-plus hospitals, yet they account for 23 per cent of the bed patients and 23 per cent of all out-patient visits. The research and training programs of the Federal Government have made it possible for these institutions to provide the teachers and biomedical investigators so important in improving the quality and effectiveness of health service.

Roughly, 3 per cent of a total of \$62 billion spent on health in 1970, was used to advance knowledge. This is in contrast to 10 per cent of the total of \$70 billion spent on research and development in the Department of Defense. A comparatively small increment to the present health budget will have a far greater beneficial impact on the welfare of the American people. The training of more and better biomedical scientists is a public responsibility and should be amply supported by public funds.

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To the Editor:

During the past year there have been numerous statements by government officials and others to the effect that too many young physicians are going into research, thereby depriving the country of badly needed medical practitioners, and that the medical schools are stimulating this trend. In part based on such opinions, reductions in biomedical training programs have been justified.

A survey of hospital house officers and fellows in training published in the journal "Hospital Physician" (April-May 1970) shows that among 1,900 internes and residents polled, a maximum of 4 per cent plan a career in research or medical administration, only a 1 per cent increment over the present distribution. Even more significant is the 3 per cent figure for those planning to go into research career among 418 M. D. postdoctoral fellows surveyed. Only 8 per cent of the internes and residents plan academic careers; 73 per cent will stay in the practice of medicine. Among the much smaller number of postdoctoral fellows, 50 per cent plan to practice